

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 10954 310618Z

17

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

----- 022868

R 301242Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9589

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

S E C R E T TEHRAN 10954

EXDIS

BEIRUT PLEASE PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, IR, US

SUBJ: U.S. POLICY ON IRAQI/IRANIAN CONFLICT

REF: BAGHDAD 898

1. ALTHOUGH DEPARTMENT DOUBTLESS HAS ITS OWN PERSPECTIVE WHICH MAY DIFFER FROM USINT/BAGHDAD AND AMEMBASSY TEHRAN ON ISSUE OF US POLICY ON IRAQI/IRANIAN CONFLICT, WE DO NOT SHARE THE CONCERNS, ASSESSMENT, OR CONCLUSIONS OF REFTEL. OUR REASONS FOLLOW:

2. THE SHAH SEES THE BAKR/SADDAM HUSSEIN REGIME AS A BUNCH OF THUGS AND MURDERERS IMPLACABLY HOSTILE TO HIM AND, HE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT, TO THE WEST GENERALLY. HE REMAINS UNCONVINCED THAT IRAQI EFFORTS TO BREAK OUT OF ITS ISOLATION ARE ANY MORE THAN TACTICAL MOVES TO EASE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PRESSURES. HE BELIEVES THAT AT HEART THE PRESENT BAATHIST REGIME IS STILL COMMITTED POLITICALLY AND IDEOLOGICALLY TO RADICAL ARABISM, THAT IT IS A TOOL FOR THE EXTENSION OF SOVIET INFLUENCE, AND THAT IT WILL PLAY THE ROLE THESE CONVICTIONS DICTATE WHEN AND WHERE IT CAN. HE SEES CONFIRMATION OF HIS CONCLUSION IN IRAQI SUBVERSIVE EFFORTS IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA, IN BALUCHISTAN AND IN IRAN ITSELF. HE SEES IRAQ AS A MISCHIEF-MAKER AND SUPPORTER OF THE PALESTINIAN REJECTION FRONT AND OTHER RADICAL ARAB FORCES ELSEWHERE. FINALLY, HE SEES IT AS A CRUEL OPPRESSOR OF ITS OWN PEOPLE, BENT ON THE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEHRAN 10954 310618Z

DESTRUCTION OF THE KURDS, THE SHIAS AND ANY OTHERS THAT MAY STAND

IN ITS WAY.

3. IN THE NARROWER PERSPECTIVE OF THE KURDISH/BAGHDAD CONFLICT, WE DO NOT THINK THE SHAH FEELS THE KURDS ARE FIGHTING A HOPELESS BATTLE. WHILE HE IS PROBABLY NOT ANXIOUS THAT THE KURDS "WIN" TO THE EXTENT OF ESTABLISHING A TOTALLY AUTONOMOUS OR INDEPENDENT STATE ON IRAN'S BORDER, HE WOULD NOT BE UPSET TO SEE THEM GAIN SEMI-AUTONOMOUS STATUS ALONG THE LINES OF THE AGREEMENT THAT WAS REACHED BETWEEN BARZANI AND BAGHDAD IN 1970. SO FAR, AT LEAST IN MILITARY TERMS, SUCH A DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT APPEAR UNREALISTIC. WITH ONLY MODERATE HELP FROM IRAN, THE KURDS HAVE HELD OUT AGAINST THE BEST THE IRAQI MILITARY COULD THROW AT THEM AND DURING THIS WINTER THEY MAY WELL RECOVER MUCH LOST TERRITORY AND INFLICT FURTHER DAMAGE ON IRAQI MORALE. IT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR THE KURDS TO TAKE BAGHDAD "TO WIN." IF THEY SUCCEED IN BRINGING DOWN THE BAATHIST GOVERNMENT OR, AT A MINIMUM, IN FORCING IT TO COME TO ACCEPTABLE TERMS WITH THEM, THEN THE KURDS WILL HAVE "WON." ADMITTEDLY, NO ONE CAN FORESEE WHAT A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT IN BAGHDAD WOULD LOOK LIKE, BUT IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT EITHER THE KURDS OR THE SHAH BELIEVE IT COULD BE ANY WORSE THAN THE PRESENT REGIME AND THEY ARE QUITE PREPARED TO TAKE THEIR CHANCES WITH ANY SUCCESSOR.

4. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE "WE ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY HEADING FOR A LARGE-SCALE REGIONAL CONFLICT," IF IRAN CONTINUES GIVING THE KURDS ENOUGH HELP TO SURVIVE. CERTAINLY, BAGHDAD MUST REALIZE THAT IF IT LAUNCHED A DIRECT OVERT ATTACK ON IRAN, THE SOVIETS WITH HIGH STAKES IN IRAN AS WELL AS IN IRAQ, WOULD LIKELY STAND ASIDE AND IRAN COULD INFLICT SERIOUS DAMAGE ON IRAQ IN RETALIATION. AS FAR AS IRAN IS CONCERNED, IT HAS EVIDENCED NO DESIRE TO GO BEYOND ENSURING KURDISH SURVIVABILITY AND FRUSTRATING BAGHDAD'S ATTEMPTS TO CRUST THE KURDS ONCE AND FOR ALL.

5. AS TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE US AND IRAN'S INTERESTS DIVERGE IN THIS MATTER, WE WOULD ONLY NOTE OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT KURDISH-IRANIAN PRESSURE HAS KEPT SOME 80 PERCENT OF IRAQ'S MILITARY TIED DOWN ALONG THE IRAQI-IRANIAN BORDER AND THEREFORE NOT READILY AVAILABLE FOR ADVENTURISM ELSEWHERE. IT IS OBVIOUSLY NOT IN OUR INTEREST TO HAVE INSTABILITY IN THE AREA, BUT WE FRANKLY QUESTION WHETHER THE BAGHDAD REGIME, UNDER DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES, WOULD BE A STABILIZING FORCE. IT WAS AFTER ALL THE CURRENT REGIME THAT FAILED

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TEHRAN 10954 310618Z

TO LIVE UP TO THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED WITH BARZANI IN 1970 AND LAUNCHED RENEWED MILITARY EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE HIM AND HIS FOLLOWERS. IT WAS THE PRESENT REGIME THAT HAS STEADFASTLY REFUSED TO NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT WITH IRAN WHICH ADMITS THE OBSOLESCENCE OF THE 1937 TREATY DEFINING THEIR COMMON BORDER ON THE SHATT-AL-ARAB, AND IT IS THE BAGHDAD REGIME THAT APPEARS TO HAVE GIVEN AID AND SUPPORT TO THE MORE EXTREME AND OUTRAGEOUS FACTIONS IN THE ARAB WORLD, INCLUDING TERRORISTS, UP TO THE VERY PRESENT.

6. WHILE OUR INTERESTS MAY NOT COINCIDE WITH IRAN'S IN EVERY PARTICULAR VIS-A-VIS IRAQ, AND OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL AND LIMITS OF WHAT MAY BE DONE TO BRING IRAQ INTO CLOSER HARMONY WITH OUR OBJECTIVES IN THIS AREA MAY NOT BE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT, WE DO FEEL THEY ARE CLOSER TOGETHER THAN NOT. FURTHER, WE THINK THAT A DEMARCHE TO THE SHAH TO CEASE HIS SUPPORT OF BARZANI WOULD BE INADVISABLE BECAUSE IT WOULD BE UNHEEDED, UNWISE BECAUSE THE PREMISE ON WHICH IT IS PROPOSED IS UNSOUND (OR AT LEAST UNCONVINCING), AND THAT IN FACT IT WOULD NOT SERVE OVERALL US INTERESTS.

7. IN SUM, WE THINK IT IS UP TO BAGHDAD TO TAKE STEPS TO EASE ITS OWN PAIN THROUGH ACCOMMODATION WITH THE KURDS, WITH IRN AND WITH RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR GENERALLY. IF IT DID, THE ONUS WOULD BE ON IRAN AMONG OTHERS TO MAKE THE NEXT MOVE AND WE WOULD BE IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION TO ARGUE FOR ACCOMMODATION ON THE IRNIAN SIDE IF WE WERE SO DISPOSED.

MIKLOS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, INTERVENTION, COMBAT OPERATIONS, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TEHRAN10954
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750001-0015
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974123/aaaaacmx.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 BAGHDAD 898
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 AUG 2002 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. POLICY ON IRAQI/IRANIAN CONFLICT
TAGS: PFOR, IZ, IR, US, (PAHLAVI, MOHAMMAD REZA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005